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time and intelligence to the matter to have made his work, at any rate, a step in advance. Mr. Harris, however, has done little more than take from the digests in which the cases have been collected, the various summaries of the decisions, and put them in an order hardly less available for the reader than that in the digests themselves. There are few books in which the logical connection between the sections, and even in many cases between the paragraphs, is more difficult to find. Thus, under "Municipal Corporations," we find such irrelevant matters as the issue of a *certiorari* in the case of the assignment of a certificate of membership in a cotton exchange; in the case of a receiver appointed for a bank by one of the state courts; to review an order of a state superintendent of education; to review the revocation of the certificate of a pharmacist; and to vacate the resolution of church trustees in regard to a church pew. Again, in the chapter on the assessment of taxes, we find cases of the issue of the writ to quash a conviction; on suggestion of diminution; to review an order abating a nuisance; to review the revocation of an excise license, *etc., etc.* It would be tedious to enumerate all the instances of illogical treatment and faulty classification. It is useless to attempt to read the book through. The mind becomes bewildered with the multitude of unconnected facts which it is forced to consider.

In the portion of the book which purports to be devoted to general principles, it is difficult to find much more than a disconnected statement of particular applications of the writ. The author seems to have failed completely to grasp the fact that originally the writ of *certiorari* was issued merely to bodies not acting in accordance with the common law. An understanding of this is necessary to a complete understanding of the writ, and to distinguish it from the writ of error. It is needless to say that the work does not notice in any way the development which has been going on in the application of the writ of late years in this country. Such a book as this is really discouraging to those who are hoping for a scientific treatment of the law.

F. J. GOODNOW.

De la Liberté Politique dans l'État Moderne. Par ARTHUR DESJARDINS. Paris, E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie., 1894. — xv, 365 pp.

This is in my judgment one of the most remarkable books which has appeared in the French literature of political science during the last half century. In fact, it is in spirit rather English or American

than French. The clear distinction between civil liberty and political liberty; the accurate and exhaustive definition of civil liberty; and the well considered appreciation of political liberty, as the totality of the means enjoyed by the citizen for the protection of his civil liberty—are all English-American in principle. If the author can only lead French thought upon this vital subject, it will not be a decade before the French constitution will contain a “bill of rights,” and will provide for an independent judiciary to interpret and apply its provisions in behalf of the individual against the tyranny and paternalism of government.

The author has not written his words of wisdom any too soon. The reform which he indicates is, it seems to me, an absolute necessity to the permanence of republican government in France. The French system is rapidly degenerating into the despotism of the Chamber of Deputies. Without a well established, well understood, constitutional civil liberty, under the protection of an independent judiciary, the rapid changes in ministries, each outbidding its predecessor in the radical nature of its program, must before long produce such a feeling of insecurity as will cause a revulsion of sentiment against republican institutions. It is from this point of view that the work of M. Desjardins appears to me to be full of sage advice to his countrymen.

The last part of the last chapter of the work is devoted to a most wholesome exposition and criticism of the weaknesses of French political character. The author makes these to consist, first, in over-hastiness, which degenerates easily into recklessness, and manifests itself by a rough-shod gallop over existing rights, conditions and relations towards an abstract ideal; second, in fickleness, which causes the abandonment of any fixed line of policy before sufficient experience has been made with it to test its value; and third, in national conceit, which produces an under-estimate of the contributions of other countries to civilization, and tends to fill the minds of Frenchmen with the harmful fancy not only that France leads the world, but that France is the world.

The criticism is both just and friendly, and the purpose of it is most patriotic and necessary; for unless the French shall cure themselves of these weaknesses, it is almost certain that they will never arrive at that system of civil liberty which renders the permanence of republican institutions possible and reasonably probable.

J. W. BURGESS.